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191 I may mention at once that the mimicry of the Bakaïrí mutatis mutandis with more or less temperament was repeated among all tribes, that only the interjections differed, but the gestures were exactly the same. Here in the tobacco club I also first became acquainted with the stone-ax pantomime which, though in itself very touching, we later had to endure in the case of each tribe to the point of boredom. It described the contrast between the stone ax and the iron ax, which was immediately demonstrated to them by Antonio, and to my feeling, before I became dulled by the repetition, indeed at the beginning, just because it was so inexorably repeated, it had something unusually gripping about it, like a sort of stammering protest of metal-less humanity against the crushing hammer blows of civilization, a protest which, as I still experienced it here, must have resounded unheard a thousand times in all the corners of the earth.

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412 How the Bakaïrí tortures himself to fell a tree: early in the morning, when the sun, tschischi, rises -- it rises there in the east -- he starts to swing the stone ax. And tschischi travels upward and the Bakaïrí goes on striking bravely, tsök, tsök, tsök. His arms grow ever wearier -- they are rubbed and drop down limply, he blows a weak puff of air out of his mouth and passes his hand over his exhausted face; he goes on striking, no longer with tsök, tsök, but with a groan drawn from the depths of his chest. The sun stands high in the zenith; his stomach -- his flat hand rubs over it or is laid deep in a fold -- is empty; how hungry the Bakaïrí is -- his face is drawn into the most pitiful expression. Finally, when tschischi is already very low, a tree falls: tokële = one, the little finger points out. But you, the Karaibe -- suddenly everything about the mimic is alive and strong -- the Karaibe takes his iron ax, swings it aloft, brings it down heavily, tsök, tsök, pum -- ah..., there lies the tree, a hard stamp with the foot, on the ground already. And here and there and here again, one sees them falling everywhere. Conclusion for the Karaiben: give us your iron axes.

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201 412 [536] No activity with a tool of metal, stone, tooth, or wood was discussed without the appearance also of the appropriate sounds to portray it. It is true that a good part of this was to communicate with me, who knew only the rudiments of their language; they were more sparing with these /72/ sounds and gestures in their own conversation, but they nevertheless had at their disposal in ample measure the auxiliary language of expressive movement and used it in their communications with other tribes, as I saw later, in exactly the same way as with me. Thus the disadvantage that each tribe speaks a different language is of little concern; understanding was possible without difficulty even for a Karaiben, for the gestures, stereotyped, to be sure, nevertheless contain full clarity and still are not reduced to conventional abbreviations.

123 153 201 They also manifested an attentive interest in the interjections and gestures peculiar to me, which, of course, involuntarily took on a livelier expression than at home. If I accompanied any feeling with a sound that was strange to them, it was imitated; if I whistled softly to myself, I could soon hear one of them whistling happily along with me. Particularly if I laughed loudly and struck my leg, there was general acknowledgement; they would immediately slap their naked thighs, and Homeric laughter filled the village plaza.

126 My linguistic notes of the day, which I would bring out, were gone over once more in our tobacco club and were enriched by small contributions. The constellations, the names of animals, the inexhaustible material for parts of the body, and whatever the moment offered were noted down, read aloud, and confirmed with approval.

123 I, too, however, offered mimic performances, for which my interesting oxhide offered the first occasion; I demonstrated our domestic animals to them and achieved a greater measure of success among my small, but grateful public than could ever have fallen to the lot of even the author of "Tierleben" /Animal Life/ or much-admired performing artists. Above all they became acquainted with cattle, sheep, and dogs, whose size and characteristics I described graphically to them as best I could,

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193. The simple result is that all kinds of things that do not belong to it are regarded as part of the stem, and the form is used on all kinds of occasions where it is appropriate neither according to person, time sequence, or other nuances contained in it. The organic structure of words becomes rigid, and the sentence becomes a mosaic of the crudest sort made up of nothing but fragments. But there is provision for understanding: for the Indian, with his talent for the characteristic, the chopped-off fragment of a word suffices completely for the entire sentence, and, what is worse, if one wants to make progress in the language, it is all the more agreeable, of course, if one needs only the clumsy content of the communication: he himself soon adopts the new manner of expression: fluent conversations are carried on by barter with stamped coins instead with living words.

126 192 [194] [153] What made my recording not a little difficult was the circumstance that the Bakaïrí did not understand my questioning tone. They imitated it instead of answering. Obtaining the names of the objects present was done without any trouble; they even anticipated the need, pointed to those I had not yet asked about, and said the names. I went into great detail with the parts of the body because they are always joined with pronominal prefixes; thus the Indian does not say, for example, "tongue," but always, with the addition of the person, "my tongue," "your tongue," "his tongue," and thus there is a grammatical value in this category of the list. It was therefore well to note whether the part of the body whose stem one was asking for was shown on oneself, on the person questioned, or on a third person, for the answer was accordingly: your ẗlu, my ulu, his ilu, or in general kẗulu, the tongue of all of us here.

126 192 536 825 Recording animal names was a pleasure, for here the imitation with sounds and gestures was the most artful. A snake, an alligator head, or the like was also drawn in the sand. The quantity of the many individual statements was a hindrance to me, since I did not know enough about the voices and the behavior of their animals; they offered me subtleties in the distinction of species which, to their surprise, I was unable to appreciate, and

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126 192 536 825 sometimes I am afraid I betrayed what to them were incredible gaps in the most ordinary education.

The most difficult problem lay in the verbs, and, to be sure, not only because of the complication of forms. If I succeeded in writing down short sentences in which something was said about an occurrence that was just going on, even if I myself performed all kinds of actions, such as eating and drinking now of this, now of that, which were supposed to give them the content of a sentence, /80/ gross errors were nevertheless unavoidable. Unfortunately, they often said things that were different from what they were supposed to say according to my request and criticized the action instead of naming it. They were thinking for themselves and not for me. And in these efforts their readiness to imitate was disturbing to a high degree. I thought nothing would be easier than to obtain at least those intransitive verbs that could be evoked by unequivocal mimicry on my part; I would indeed need only to sneeze, cough, weep, yawn, snore, only to get up, sit down, to fall, and so forth, in order to be immediately rewarded with the matching words. But they either clung to the contemplation of the process itself, thought I wanted to go away when I stood up, righteously joined in when I yawned, because they, too, were tired, or were royally amused at my strange doings, and, amidst much laughter, would likewise abandon themselves to sneezing, coughing, and snoring, without, however, saying the redeeming words.

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I made the best progress when I gave them the Portuguese word and applied the formula: the Karaibe says it thus, how does the Bakairi say it? Here I finally almost always met with understanding and response, for they were mad about learning my language.

[811] They were very grieved that they did not understand me better, and, confusing hearing and understanding, they asked me to cure them. I had to put saliva on my fingers and with it rub the auditory entrance for them. Their comprehension of Portuguese was even more deficient than they themselves realized. They have

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